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P.O.W./C.I. - T.W. Houston -

Book 1

Folder 2

File: 999-2-60 Book 1

Title: Diary

Origin: Sgt. Thomas W. Houston

Dates: Dec. 1941 - Feb. 1942 Classification:

Authenticity: Photostat of original

Source: *Cabanatuan Prison Camp*

Extracted by _____ Date _____ Microfilmed _____ Date _____

...G-XI Form 91 (20 July 1945)

Handwritten notes in Arabic script

Vertical handwritten text on the right side of the label

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DETACHMENT HEADQUARTERS
March 29, 1944.

MEMORANDUM:

1. All previous memorandums in reference to water restrictions are hereby rescinded. The following water restrictions are now in effect:

a. Water may be drawn in buckets for:

Gardens: Revielle to 9:00 AM
7:15 PM to 9:00 PM.

Bathing &
Washing Clothing: Revielle to 9:00 AM
12:00 Noon to 3:00 PM
5:00 PM to 9:00 PM

b. Shower hours for Officers and Enlisted Men are as follows:

Officers: 7:15 PM to 7:45 PM.

Enlisted Men: Revielle to 9:00 AM
7:45 PM to 8:45 PM

By Order of the Det. Comdr:

C. B. Walker
C. B. WALKER
1st Sergeant.

RFB

Private 1 cl Phillip L. Scheurer, 6869675
Private 1 cl Carl E. Shaw, 18052577
Private 1 cl James G. Spencer, 38052617
Private Esperiden Archibeque, 20842359
Private Miguel H. Chaires, 30842494
Private William E. Green, 11016508
Private Siphiane Griego, 20842361
Corporal Peter W. Kirk, 19016888
Private Joseph T. Head, 15081840
Staff Sergeant Leon A. Tice, Jr., 6979131
Sergeant Dennis H. Prespere, 6714396
Corporal Fred T. Miranda, 19000458
Private 1 cl John W. Williams, 14022632
Private Alvin R. Rhodes, 18063210
Sergeant Irving D. Kidd, 17012771

2. The above named men are deserving of commendation for their excellent services rendered to the hospital patients and personnel during their time of assignment with this hospital. They have unstintingly given of their time and effort in fulfilling their respective duties in a very efficient, diligent and loyal manner. The circumstances and conditions under which they have had to work have been of an extremely trying nature, nevertheless accomplishing the work in a highly satisfactory and praiseworthy fashion. They have been a credit to this organization and have completely earned this commendation.

3. These men have been relieved from the Hospital Detachment by virtue of a Japanese Order compelling a reduction in the detachment personnel.

R. C. BUCKELJAMER,
Captain, Medical Corps,
CO, Det., Med. Dept.

"PILL-ROLLING IN BATAAN"

A Diary Record
(Personal and Trivial)

Of Events of Consequence and Inconsequence Connected with
The War in the Philippines

Starting, Dec. 8, 1941;
Ending, God Knows When.

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RESUME: This record, being opened practically a month after the outbreak of the War, contains comments in the opening resume, leading up to daily record, that must be of necessity recorded from memory.

But the time has been so short and the impressions were so vivid (and first hand), that even this initial review can reasonably be considered to be an accurate compilation of facts.

The diary starts, ergo, on Dec. 8, 1941, early in the morning and, with the past month's summary connecting with the day and the days to come, herewith is one man's history of a segment of war.

The title that I have chosen for my somewhat distorted diary is indicative of the inadequacy on the part of the writer to give by any stretch of the imagination a true or comprehensive picture of this or of any other war. A "pill-roller", or a medical soldier is not a fighting man and only a few such ever reach spots in war's arenas where the bombs are bursting in air and the bayonet is aimed at one's midriff. But, because glory is to be garnered in other fields than those which the pill-roller treads, his personal impressions of war may be illuminating to those who conceive war to be all a glorious pastime.

###

Dec. 8, 1941: 3:00 A.M.: On duty at the Receiving Office, Sternberg General Hospital, Manila, P.I. S_____, an ambulance driver, came in off a call with the story that the short wave radio reported the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese.

Naturally, the story was flatly discredited. That the Japanese would do such a thing was wholly incredible. And especially so due to the fact the Nippon-U.S. peace parley was in progress in Washington. And, to heighten incredulity, S_____ was always a great one to manufacture improbable fiction. So we mentally consigned S_____ to Ward #4 and went on with our dozing. (Ward #4 was the neuro-psychopathic ward).

6:00 a.m.: The morning Manila Bulletin arrived, carrying scareheads on the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the casualty list of 3,000, and the catastrophic destruction of property.

Men, starting to stir about in the early morning and hearing the news, were more quiet than talkative in their stunned amazement.

9:00 a.m.: I wanted to get the reaction that would be apparent in downtown Manila so, being off duty and anticipating a "restriction to post" order, I changed into civies (for the last time, I knew) and hailed a cab.

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~~Propped~~ On the Escolta, Manila's main ~~business~~ street, there was subdued excitement, frequent interchanges of glances. But business was at that hour more or less as usual.

Dropped in at the Lyric and saw the picture, "Sergeant York". A fitting prologue for things to come.

11:30 a.m.: Out of the theatre and on to a new Escolta. The subdued excitement of two hours previously had risen to a breathless hurrying, and I wondered what could have occurred in the meantime to accentuate the suspense and strained anticipation.

The doors of two banks were closed and their street entrances were crowded with impatient Manila residents, wanting their money and finding it temporarily denied them.

Clerks were taping large plate glass windows of the principal stores and, with a sudden tingling of the spine, I realized that they were preparing for bomb explosions.

Walking rapidly to Plaza Gaiti, the cries of newsboys hawking extras (most unusual in Manila) caught my attention. I bought a four-page Manila Bulletin having its front page headlines in glaring red ink. "Baguio Bombed"; "Air Raid in Pampanga"; "Stotsenburg and San Fernando Attacked"; "Japs Land at Davao". Thus was brought to me in Manila the realization of war in the Philippines.

And thus started for me the American-Japanese War in these islands. There are other names for the war, and it involves innumerable more phases here, and more peoples and territories than implied by the name I use. But, it being beyond my capacity to present more than a few impressions of one small phase of the local conflict, the above name is the most apt for my use.

That noontime of our first day of war was distinctive to me because I was the only soldier visible on the streets, on the Plaza, in Tom's Bar and in the Plaza Lunch.

And the new, emphasized spirit of fraternity was flourishing. The cold, conventional barriers between waiters and patrons was gone. The boys on the other side of the counter at the Plaza Lunch appropriated my extra, and a girl selling lottery tickets hung over my shoulder in order to read the news. One waiter told me of his mother and brother living in Pampanga. The girl called me "soldier" with a new inflection in her voice.

1:00 a.m.: Back at the hospital to hear three things: One, everyone was restricted to the post. Two, ~~the~~ wearing of civilian clothes was prohibited. Three, ~~trainloads~~ of battle casualties were due in from the north.

And late that evening and all the following night the entire hospital staff, from the colonel on down to the rawest buck private, was overworked with the rush of incoming injured.

Iba Field in Zambales was practically destroyed. What planes were there were wrecked by bombs and 50 or 60 ~~machine~~ machine gunfire from strafing Jap planes before they could take to the air. Twenty-five or thirty young fellows, lieutenants and pilots all, were shipped down to Sternberg to recover or to die from their wounds. Others, enlisted men, made up the living casualties from Iba. There was no accurate report secured as to the number of dead left up there on the China Sea coast.

Clark Field and Stotsenburg were both bombed, and casualties from both stations swelled the influx to our hospital.

Nichols Field was bombed that night and Fort Wm. McKinley was threatened.

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*Emperor of the Empire**Rising Sun*

If the ~~Emperor of the Empire~~ had the divine powers attributed to him by his minions and could see over distance and through the dark nights, I'll bet he sat on his throne in Tokyo and chuckled in vast amusement at the fearless colonel and frightened sergeant beating the bushes of Mehan Gardens for non-existent, slant-eyed devils.

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The occasional squadrons of enemy bombers passing overhead in the daytime, with noontime raids occurring with clock-like regularity, became customary. They were invariably accompanied by a host of anti-aircraft bursts, and the distant boom of bombs at Nichols Field and at Cavite.

The inevitable aftermath was always a stream of vehicles of all types, coming night and day, bringing fresh victims from those places. Other vehicles, not so carefully but more heavily loaded, crowded with the burdens the capacity of the army morgue.

####

In the twelve days that passed between the 12th and the 24th of December (Christmas Eve), there were constant repetitions of the events and conditions already reported, with various new developments that will be noted here without detailed or chronological order.

One day the cry, "The Japs Are in Manila", had us all on edge. What it was was only a barge walled in by boxes and covered with a tarpaulin, and towed by a tugboat, had disgorged a score or so of Jap fishermen, intent on suicide, just below the Santa Cruz bridge and near the postoffice. Machine guns of the Philippine Constabulary units at the bridge heads had dispensed with most of them. A few scrambled to shore and dived into the corridors of the postoffice. There a detachment from the 31st Infantry, U.S. Army, cleaned up the stragglers.

Another time, a fishing boat near a bridge in Paco, a part of Manila and farther up the Pasig River, was challenged by a detail of Philippine Scouts. As the boat refused to stop, the Filipinos opened fire, and another squad of fanatical Japs, intent on some errand of sabotage, was reduced to a number of dead bodies.

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Came word of the capture of Guam and Midway islands and the siege, the brave defense and the eventual fall of Midway Island.

Hongkong was besieged and taken by the Japs.

Japs landed troops at Davao, in Southern Mindanao, Legaspi and Batangas in Southern Luzon, and at points at the northernmost tips of the latter island.

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Getting a two-hour pass from the hospital on the afternoon of the 12th, I went out to Pasay and found Tony R. and her boy uncertain and apprehensive. Their transportable personal belongings were in bundles, crowding the floor space of their apartment. But the two did not know whether to evacuate with the throngs of refugees rushing to the provinces, to seek refuge with Tony's brother-in-law out on Avenida Rizal, or to stay put and brave the dangers of bombs, fire and looters, in lonely desperation.

I heartened them the best I could and counseled them to wait until I could contact Staff Sgt. R. at Fort Mills, on Corregidor island, by phone. I reached him that night and learned that he was much upset in his concern over the welfare of his wife and boy.

I took the liberty the next few days of leaving the post occasionally to see that Tony and Junior moved, with all property, to a new home just a few doors from Tony's relatives out on Rizal. I was able by means of phone calls to R. to reassure him as to their safety. 7

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The military hospital facilities of Manila were greatly overtaxed and there was instituted a previously planned program of rapid expansion. The Jai Alai building of Taft Avenue, sport and dancing center of Manila's permanent "elite", became the Manila Military Medical Center, with the headquarters staff of Sternberg General Hospital forming the nucleus of a larger staff organized there.

The buildings of Estado Mayor, La Salle University, Philippines Women's College and other educational units were taken over by the army to form (with Sternberg) eight or nine annexes to the main center.

Civilian Filipinas girls supplemented office and ward staffs. Native nurses came to help the Army Nurse Corps.

Medical officers of Filipino branches of the USAFFE augmented the ranks of the American Medical Corps.

McKinley was abandoned and Nichols Field was evacuated. The Navy medical staff at Canacao Hospital (geographically a part of the Cavite Navy Yard) left their empty hospital and came to Sternberg and Estado Mayor with their patients. (Some days later the navy personnel and navy patients moved to the New Navy Hospital at Calococan, beyond Quezon City, on the northern outskirts of Manila.)

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The major invasion of the Philippines by the Nips came when eighty Jap transports carried an army of perhaps 50,000 Japanese, with munitions and supplies, down through the China Sea and into Lingayen Gulf, over 200 kilometers north of Manila and on the western shore of Luzon. The invaders disembarked in La Union province and set themselves for their southern drive.

The invading units in Legaspi and Batangas, to the south, were strengthened, and 40 Nipponese transports unloaded their human and mechanical freight in Tayabas. Then began the major struggle in the Philippines.

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At Sternberg we waited for news of American re-inforcements for our fighting units. We watched the skies for American bombers and fighting planes. The Manila "Philippines Free Press" ran a cartoon showing a trio of American fighting men, a soldier, a sailor and a marine, coming over the top. At the top of the cartoon in large type ran the inscription, "The Yanks Are Coming". At the bottom of the cartoon, in smaller type, appeared the words, "We Hope". As it later turned out, we all were to wait for quite a spell and to experience a goodly portion of defensive warfare on our own before our Uncle could manage to Send On Ships.

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Came tales of individual ~~and American/heroism/~~ American and Filipino heroism. One Filipino airman brought down more than his quota of Jap bombers. An American captain, flying a P-40, bagged 4 Jap planes. All of the Filipino airman, as well as their American co-fighters, merited praise for their splendid conduct in aerial warfare. And the Filipino ground troops, especially the Scout regiments and Constabulary, fought with courage and stamina. The Philippine Army troops, mostly conscripts and unseasoned youngsters, faltered at times, but to them must go the credit of obstructing by their numbers the march of the Japs, and, in any analysis, must be considered the factor that the untrained boys were laying down their lives in the path of vastly superior numbers, and of veteran Japanese troops highly skilled in the deadly art of warfare.

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Fox holes and V-trenches to shelter patients and hospital personnel in times of possible air raids, were dug in all the lawns of the hospital

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at Sternberg. Gas masks were supposed to be slung ready for instant use at all times. Steel helmets featured the styles de chapeau.

For the first two weeks officers and non-coms vied with each other for the possession of pistols confiscated from patients.

Sentries patrolled the streets and intersections, and guarded public buildings. Many random shots, fired by nervous sentries, punctuated the night noises and brought fear and trembling to peace-loving citizens who were forced to use the streets at night.

Flares sent up at night by undiscovered persons were frequent. And the bursts of machine gun fire, seeking out the perpetrators, endangered the lives of all persons within range.

About this time an army colonel called the Receiving Office around midnight one night when I was on duty there. He was worried about his chauffeur and personal car.

He had dispatched his man in the car to a public building close to the hospital a couple of hours previously, on some errand or other. The driver had not returned, and the colonel was worried. Would I go out in front of the hospital and question the guards there, to learn if by any chance they had halted and were holding the car and driver, or whether the guard had commandeered the vehicle for any purpose?

As he was a colonel, I could and I did. Returning to the office and calling his number, I had to report that nothing was ~~nothing~~ by personnel of the hospital regarding the colonel's car and chauffeur.

Then the next request of the colonel put me out on a limb. "Sergeant", he said, "The Philippine Constabulary and Army Headquarters building is directly across Arroceros street from your office, is it not? And I believe that there are a number of native sentries there. Would you go, or would you have someone go across and inquire of these boys whether any of them has seen my car or my chauffeur?"

If that wasn't a poser! It was midnight, and it was dark. Very dark. There were six Phil. Army sentries around that deep-shadowed building, and they generally were ~~raw~~ raw recruits. Time and again they had nervously halted imaginary prowlers, and then promptly blazed away with their 30-36's before the non-existent saboteur could have responded even if he had a voice. And it wasn't my car, ~~nor~~ nor my chauffeur!

But he who was asking me to do this thing was a colonel, and colonels outrank buck sergeants by a ~~couple of stripes and an oak leaf or two~~ handful of stripes & brass, so, I replied, "Yes, SIR!" ~~consigning~~

So, donning my helmet and gas mask, and mentally, all dilatory drivers to the most remote and hottest corner of Dante's Inferno, I ferreted to do but not wanting to die.

Now, I can be military if and when I want to. And I'll wager that no one, anywhere or anytime, responded with more military promptness and exactness ~~than I did~~ than I did whenever one of those frightened sentries asked me who I was. Not that I was frightened, myself. Of course not, but I just wanted to reassure them. No sooner had they popped the question, when I made the welkin ring with my expressions of deep and abiding friendship. And I always was fervently hoping that each and very one of them had had lessons in English and knew the meaning of the word "Friend". Incidentally, I never did learn what had happened to that damned chauffeur. Dec. 24th, 1941.

The Day Before Christmas marked the introduction of a new phase of the war for us at Sternberg.

Came to us the censored reports that the Japs were gradually closing in on the bay area, from Legaspi, Batangas and Tayabas, and that the main

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body of the Nips in the north had pushed back our lines from Lingayen Gulf, down through La Union and back into Pampanga.

Toward noon, Major ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ G _____, commanding officer Sternberg since the colonel's move to Jai Alai, came to me personally while I was on duty at the Receiving Office. (I had been shifted to day duty and given charge of the office when the former N.C.O. in charge had gone with the colonel to the new headquarters). He, the major, himself passed to us the order that all fire-arms, bayonets, large knives and any other weapons, even billy clubs and black jacks, must be turned in to Medical Supply. This was being done so that Sternberg could be proven to be strictly a non-combatant establishment. He also told me that if any Japanese detachment or unit was to pass or to enter the hospital, we were to do nothing to interfere. On the other hand, we were to cooperate with the Nips.

All this gave us a good idea of what was impending.

On the same morning Manila was declared an open city by USAFFE. But the Japs did not so recognize it. At least, not at first. For Port Area was blasted by bombs that very same morning.

Port Area was two longish whoops and a holler from our location, but when those bombs exploded over yonder, the seven hundred odd humans at Sternberg performed the prairie dog trick in nothing flat, and it was some time before any of us dared to poke our noses up out of our holes and trenches to see who had and had not been killed.

Dec. 25, 1941. Christmas Day: Port Area and Nichols Field were again pounded by Jap bombs.

In the afternoon we of the Receiving office were unusually hard pushed with work. Even the night crew was called on to assist. So, until 4:30 p.m., we were entirely oblivious of the new turn of events.

It is true that we had absent-mindedly noticed members of our own detachment passing and re-passing our office with field equipment, barracks bags and what not. But we merely assumed that another detail was being detached to field duty, and we were too busy to bother with that. (Eighty men had been dispatched to "Somewhere" just two days before, and we had heard that another party was soon due to go.)

But, at 4:30, the fever of mysterious, hurried activity invaded our nook. Acting on a hunch, I took a quick pasear down to Estado Mayor to question 1st Sergeant B _____. And the orders he gave me caused me to grab a phone and pass on the word to my crew. For the orders were that all white members of the personnel were evacuating Sternberg, and pronto!

It was grab a pack, roll it, and throw a few necessaries into a ~~Nip~~ barracks bag. "Night leave at any moment".

In the excitement the R.O. crew had been forgotten, and there we had gone on for hours, typing 55-a's that never would be recorded!

Having learned the knack of field maneuvering quite a few years ago, it did not take me long to catch up with the others. I had my pack rolled, had had a snack of chow and was idling while many others were still in the throes of rolling their first full-pack.

But it came near to breaking my half Scotch heart to leave behind me a wall locker full of new civilian clothing and a foot locker crammed with other personnel property. But I preferred that it be my stuff and not myself that was to be confiscated by the yellow men from the north.

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Christmas Night: Daylight waned and twilight found us American medical ~~at~~ soldiers beginning to be accustomed to the new order of things. The transportation seeming slow in coming, we composed ourselves singly or in groups on the grass quadrangle at Estade Mayor with rather amazing complacency for whatever was to come.

I found a mattress and put it out on the tennis court. Lying there prone and gazing up at the silvery moon, the bright stars and the white floating clouds, memories, thoughts and anticipations passed through my mind with a slow laziness akin to the gradual drifting of the tenuous, snowy clouds in the blue-black vault above me. Their edges were silvered by the radiant moonbeams and, if the odd metaphor be permitted, the description rather fitted my thoughts. For they were truly tinged with a romantic brightness, and my being was thrilled by a sense of impending adventures.

On Our Way To Somewhere:

Finally, lists of names were called, and groups were segregated. The first group was to return to Sternberg to re-inforce the staff of Filipino and civilian personnel that had been left there. The rest of us, in busload lots, were carted down to Pier # 1.

We arrived there at about mid-night, to find the two Fort Mills (Corregidor) at the docks awaiting us. And there we caught up with the officers and nurses and Jai Alai bunch.

There was confusion and bewilderment, but the loading processes went on. The moon bathed us in its white light, and a million stars shed their eerie light while we ~~edative~~ insignificant members of the human species labored and perished in our hurried evacuation.

To add to the tenseness we were feeling, two huge oil reserves, situated across the bay below Cavite, were dynamited and set aflame while we were in the act of boarding our ferries.

The thunder of the great explosions rolled and rumbled across the darkened waters, followed by the view of great pillars of flame shooting to the high heavens. And all the visible world about us was flooded with a blood-red light that grimly illuminated for us the far shore, the wide bay, ships at their piers and our own solemn faces.

As we set our course for Corregidor the huge fires would occasionally blaze up, other explosions would blast, and we would be in a streaming flame of light.

But the excitement was insufficient to keep me awake for long and, curled up on great coils of big hawsers, I dropped off into untroubled sleep.

I awakened in the first gray light of dawn to find that our boat ~~w~~ was tied up at the dock at Corregidor.

Dec. 26, 1941:

A smoke. A stretch. A visit to the washroom (Pardon me--the heads) to refresh myself. Back to the pile of rope. One man gave me a third of a can of pork and beans: my breakfast. Another, a drink of native rum: a "picker-upper".

At about 8:00 a.m., the lines were cast off again and we headed northward up the bay coast for the Pier at Lamao, near the Barrio of Lamao, in Batjan province, and located at about Highway Kilometer Post 150. (I frequently enter the kilometer posts in this record, for they come to give a semblance of geographic orientation to the whole).

We neared Lamao at about 11:00 a.m., and no sooner had we started to disembark than the drone of Jap bombers overhead quickened our movements and caused a scrambling and a scuttling up the diked road way that

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served there for a pier. It was medical soldiers on the move in a great big way and before a man could say "Jack Robinson", we were belly down in fox holes and road ditches near the barrier. And nary a bomb was dropped.

Lamco Point was in those days a focus of hurried activity. On the highway trucks loaded with men or supplies of all kinds roared back and forth. Boats that had arrived before ours had caused the pier head and base to be piled high with heterogeneous stores. Groups of laborers were being directed here and there to shift or to load the stores on to the trucks. Our own fevered process of unloading swelled the general hullabaloo.

At possibly twenty-minute intervals hell-bent squadrons of Jap bombers would pass over and then our locality would suddenly become blank of person or sound as we crouched in our stilled coverts and wondered how it would feel to have high-powered bomb bounce off of one's backbone.

But the Sons of the ~~Sea~~ ~~Sea~~ at the sticks of the bombers had more important business at hand than the extinction of a few assorted troops at a pygmy pier. They roared over with their setting of eggs destined for The Rock, that Gibraltar of Manila Bay ~~and~~ guarding the outlet to the China Sea.

Some of the bombers braved the storm of AA shells, to unload their eggs over Corregidor. Others veered off from the blasting fire, to wheel about like hawks, out of range of crouching American and Filipino gunners, later to vent their spite on craft in the bay.

An oil tanker was set ablaze, then another. An American submarine amused us with its grim comedy as it alternately submerged to duck the bombs that splashed mightily down in its deep wake, and rose again to figuratively thumb its nose at the silver craft dwindling in the azure distance.

An American destroyer was cruising through the straits toward the bay. A stick of six bombs sent six great geysers into the air close astern. That greyhound of the sea took off in a frightened spurt, full speed ahead, that sprayed high feathers of silvery water back from her bows, and confusing the rangefinding of the Jap air men.

Several of the Jap planes were shot down. They in turn inflicted some damage to The Rock and sunk two tankers.

That same afternoon, after most of us medical soldiers had left the vicinity, a detail left behind, under the charge of a friend of mine, to finish the unloading, had the questionable distinction of having a squadron of enemy bombers unload their deadly freight at them. All but one bomb fell harmlessly in the water about the pier head and boat. That one fell on to the roadway atop the pier, digging out about one third of the road at that spot.

I was in the first bus of medical enlisted men to leave the locality. The nurses and most of the officers had already left.

We drove to about Kilometer Post #140, and the bus was stopped at a point where a narrow, little used lane joined the highway. (The numbers of the posts grew less as we the highway hugged the bay shore northward, where it curved itself in Pampanga province and stretched on southward into Manila.)

Up the lane we hiked, by two's, spaced six paces apart, for about half a kilometer.

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We then arrived at a level spot covering perhaps two acres, shielded from the view of enemy bombers by the wide spreading branches of great, aged acacias.

There a detachment of the 12th Medical Regiment, Philippine Scouts, had established a temporary field station and there we found our vanguard of officers and nurses. Other trucks and busses brought the remainder of our men and equipment.

At one-thirty that afternoon we had our first meal of the day, and it was by the grace of the mess of 12th Med. Reg't boys. We ate their rice and ~~stew~~ stew and liked it. I did notice, though, that the nurses and officers were eating canned beans that they had filched from the stores on the boat.

That evening we had rice and hash and on the following morning we had hash and rice. There was always a sufficient quantity of strong, hot coffee, canned milk and sugar.

The quiet of the evening and following morning was broken occasionally by air raid alarms, but there happened not the slightest cause for real concern.

That night the nurses slept on cots and mattresses in an arroyo under one acacia, the officers bedded down in another space and the enlisted men, white and brown, scattered about at their individual pleasure. It was no hardship. I undressed and slept under a mosquito net, on an air-spring mattress held from the earth by a litter, and was rolled up in a new, gray blanket.

To wash in the morning we meandered for several ~~hundred~~ hundred yards down a foot path, down a hillside to a piped spring where warm water gushed forth. A "Juan de la Cruz" lazily followed a lazier caribao in the field nearby.

Our brown brothers-in-arms were stripping to their shorts and sluicing water over their glistening, coppery bodies. If the truth be told, they exhibited more cleanliness and thoroughness in their habits in the field than we were ~~at~~.

Strolling back up the hill, I encountered a bevy of nurses heading down toward the spring. I warned them to raise their voices to tell those below of their coming. Otherwise they might run into a scene where they would be forced to pretend shocked modesty. So they laughingly started singing as they neared the spring.

That same morning:

We loaded up again onto trucks and busses and split up for two different destinations. One group of about twenty-five enlisted men were to go to a previously established but newly opened medical depot. The rest of us, forming a much larger group and including all of the officers and nurses, set out for Camp Limay, Municipality of Limay, Kilometer Post #145, where General Hospital # 1 was to be established.

Camp Limay, built in 1941, had been occupied by the 45th Inf., Phil. Scouts, since August 19, 1941. They had evacuated there at the outbreak of the war to take to the field. The camp consisted of perhaps thirty-five structures. All but six was of "native" material.

The floors of the twenty-nine buildings, as well as the steps, framework and finishing, was of "Philippine mahogany", the walls were of woven split bamboo, and the roofs were of thatched nipa grass. Most of the buildings were long and narrow, to serve originally as barracks. Another long one had been, probably, the administrative building. The last named became the new hospital's operating pavilion.

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The others like it became the wards. The latrines were shorter, smaller structures, while the several messhalls were of intermediate size.

A group of small, comparatively isolated buildings, at the head of the road leading from the gate, became the receiving and administrative center of the hospital.

The longest buildings, two in number and formerly officer's quarters and mess, at the southern side of the camp, were again used for the same purposes as formerly, except that the nurses were quartered where officers had been and the medical officers took possession and established themselves in the barracks nearest to the two named *buildings*.

The camp was between the highway and the bay shore, directly adjacent to the southern side of the Municipality of Limay.

Along the beach stood a row of six large bodegas, sheeted with galvanized and corrugated tin, that housed the quartermaster, utilities and medical supply depots.

The two warehouses comprising the hospital's medical supply had been installed and packed full some weeks and months before, in anticipation of the war, and in execution of the "Grunert Plan", by which we, in "retiring" to the Bataan Peninsula, were also being placed at Limay.

In the center of the grounds, lined by the barracks or wards-to-be, was a long, spacious rectangle, broken up and shaded by large acacia trees.

Thickets and woods to the south. Thickets and woods to the west, between our camp and the highway. The beach and the bay on the east; and the crowded, ancient, stilted and crazily leaning nipa shacks of Limay to the north. The municipality was separated from our grounds by a narrow, sluggish lagoon.

The camp's electricity was furnished by its own rather inadequate power plant, which also pumped our water from a deep artesian well into to reservoir atop the water tower. This water was fairly pure but, to insure absolute potability, all of our drinking water was chlorinated. (It was on the circular, railed platform of the water tower that a watchout was constantly kept to watch for and to warn us below of the approach of Nip bombers).

Cool breezes generally blew across our camp off the bay, to lessen the heat at mid-day and to necessitate a blanket at night. It seemed a healthy spot, but it was in malaria country. They forced a daily dose of quinine on to every person.

Still Dec. 27, 1941, and back to the record:

We came into camp about the middle of the morning to find already established there the sight men, mostly McKinley "medics", who had left Sternberg two days before we had. No patients. No wards set up. Buildings destined to be wards cluttered up with the personal belongings of members of the 45th Inf. Clothes lockers, trash and dust that would have to be got rid of.

For the next few days all labored mightily. The mess was re-organized. Offices opened up. The operating room was equipped. Wards were emptied, cleaned and re-filled, beds and all the usual ward paraphernalia.

All corpsmen were driven out of their barracks and ordered to make their beds in pup tents (or without pup tents, if they wished) out in the neighboring woods.

Preparations were going forward for a great influx of battle casualties.

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And the first trickle of patients started on the first night we of the second detachment had reached here. The trickle grew, daily and nightly. It swelled in increasing proportions so that, labor as we might, we could hardly get beds into the wards fast enough to accommodate the broken and lacerated bodies.

To-day, January 8, 1942, after twelve days of expansion, fifteen wards of nearly fifty beds each have been crammed full, two warehouses have been emptied of stores and filled with beds, and still the hospital is "reaching the saturation point" with patients.

And now they are roofing over the spaces between wards to make new bed space for the victims of the war god.

Shortly after our group came here the remainder of the staff at Sternberg followed us, bringing the Sternberg patients with them. A hospital ship has gone to Australia. Hospital #2, to have a far greater capacity than this one, has been opened near Kilometer Post #162, down nearer to Mariveles and the point of the Bataan peninsula, and is rapidly filling.

And the field stations at the front lines are begging for us to take their accumulations more rapidly.

The operating pavilion, with a constantly growing staff, is ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~staying~~ ^{staying} night and day.

A burial squad is always kept busy.

And the casualties keep coming. Some to be buried near here. A few to develop gas gangrene and die the most horrible way. Some to be evacuated to Hospital #2.

Two wards are filled with men with one or more limbs amputated. I walked through Ward 8 this morning and saw that over half the beds were supplemented by the frameworks, ropes and pulleys that are used to apply traction to broken arms and legs.

I've seen a twenty-two year old chap who a few months ago was an Iowa farm hand, simple in tastes and ambitions. To-day he has shrapnel wounds in ankle, thigh, side, wrist and cranium.

Busloads of "reconstructed" fighting men are leaving here every day, to be returned to the front. Others, with deeper wounds, know that their time to return will come.

And the hospital staff continues to work. Ours is not the battle that those on the front are waging. We have no guns. There are no blood-stirring incidents out of which recognized heroes are made. But the work is a good job to be doing.

White and brown surgeons and physicians, nurses and corpsmen are saving lives, patching up battered bodies and restoring health and energy to shattered systems. And the deaths are not of our doing.

In the last two weeks Manila has been evacuated by the USAFFE and the Nips have moved in. Corregidor has taken an awful pounding but in turn has brought down out of the blue a mighty sweet number of the raiders. And the Old Rock is still impregnable.

Before any really good words reached us came verified (or so it ~~seems~~ ^{seems}) reports that the Japs were occupying most of the Philippine Archipelago save this province of Bataan in which we are located. This 30- or 40 mile wide by perhaps 60 mile long arm of Luzon embracing the outer and northern shelter of Manila Bay is now bounded (in our perspective) by our fighting line to the north, China Sea on the west, Manila Bay to the east and Corregidor on the south.

Whether or not we win this particular battle of Bataan, whether or not we extend the Battle of Bataan until reinforcements arrive, is to be decided right along hereabouts.

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Day by day the battle draws closer to the time of decision, one way or the other.

Innumerable rumors are rife. "Wake, Midway and Guam are retaken by the Americans". "That is a fake rumor". "Russia has declared war on the Japs and her submarines are routing the Jap navy". "That's tommy-rot". "Two hundred of our planes are perched in North Borneo, awaiting the signal for the Big Push". "We have many planes here in Bataan, hiding, waiting for the right day to come". "We haven't got a damned plane west of Pearl Harbor". "A huge convoy, bearing men, munitions and guns, 15-- 50-- 100 miles long is 10-- 36-- 72-- hours out of Manila". (The last garbled story has persisted for over a week now). "No convoy is coming". "The marines have landed". "The marines are landing". "The marines will land soon". "No marines will come". And a hundred greater and lesser notions!

But not everything is dismal and foreboding, morbid and war-scarred. The bay ripples in peaceful serenity. The sky is blue and the mountain slopes continuously invite one to gay explorations of their green thickets and blue canyons.

Officers stroll betimes with the American nurses, and none seem to care that all are clad in a strange mixture of garments, whatever was salvaged in the rush from Manila or whatever comes to hand here.

Enlisted men try their luck with the Filipino nurses, and an attractive lot they are in the main!

Nurses have put aside their dignity here in the war zone, doing menial work around the ward that in peace time they would scorn to think of doing.

And there is a pleasant camaraderie existing between all ranks and grades and races.

We have grown tired of ducking for foxholes every time a Jap plane passes overhead. It is within the realm of possibility that we may one day regret our growing indifference but, now, "familiarity breeds contempt".

The only time they came close with bombs was about a week ago. One morning two Jap observation planes came over, and flew very low. They banked, circled and returned, in perfect position for machine gun strafing of our camp. Again and again they zoomed low and roared across our roof tops. We cowered in our trenches.

They obviously were inspecting our place and perhaps verifying the authenticity behind the huge red crosses we had plastered about the grounds and on the roofs.

They made not the slightest threat of firing, in spite of their terrifying zooms. All would have gone well, I believe, had not one lone rifleman somewhere, in very close proximity to the hospital grounds, got an itchy trigger finger.

His one rifle shot, cracking the tense immobility of hundreds of persons, set off the fireworks. In ten seconds scores of rifles, three or four machine guns and any number of automatic pistols were being emptied into the air, with the two Jap planes the shifting targets.

I say into the air because to all appearances the planes were untouched and they continued for several minutes to cross and re-cross above the hospital.

Nearly all of the furious fusillade came from Constabulary, Scout and American troops in the municipality, in the woods and along the highway. Perhaps half a dozen guns within the hospital limits were fired.

My conceptions of the attitude of the Nips and of their motives and reactions, leading up to the second part of the story, is as follows:

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They returned to their landing field and looked over their planes. Probably a few bullet holes were found in their wings and fuselages. They were revengeful. They had deliberately withheld all fire in a routine examination of an enemy hospital, out of respect for the red crosses, and their forbearance had been repaid with spiteful deadliness.

Anyway, the following morning, when all seemed peaceful and without the slightest warning, twelve ear-splitting explosions resounded, and twelve black and brown clouds spurted from the earth skyward.

So great was our surprise and fright, it was several minutes before we realized that the hospital grounds themselves had not been touched.

What must have been two planes had come from an extremely high altitude, shutting off their motors before beginning long slanting dives. Then, catapulting silently out of low-hanging clouds, they had loosed their two death-dealing sticks of bombs and roared on away before anyone was really aware of their presence.

In about ten minutes, by the time we had caught our breath, the space-shaking roar of sound was repeated, but only one stick (six bombs) were dropped this time. But our fright was not less in proportion.

Again the grounds themselves were not hit. But the snipers of the day before paid a gory price for their recklessness of the previous day. And the women and children still living in the village were less in number after the Jap's awful punishment. The work of the operating pavilion and their wards was augmented. Soldiers, civilian men, women and children were brought in in a sudden stream.

On the afternoon of the same day all troops in close proximity to the hospital were given absolute, inviolate orders to withhold their fire from all planes flying over the hospital. All civilians had evacuated by night-fall.

The only other startling sounds to break the hum-drum of the days and nights were the sudden cracks of small arms' fire, or occasional short bursts from machine guns, when nervous or inexperienced guards or sentries lost their self control. Then, too, a patrol was assigned to kill off all the stray hogs left behind by evacuees, and the popping of rifle cartridges accompanied by the squeal of pigs, created some diversion.

Dec. 9, 1944:

To review the last three days and then to start the daily record. Not until three days ago did there come to us any truly heartening facts (or what we optimistically accept as facts) to lift again our spirits and to wondrously revive our shaken faith that the Philippine struggle would be settled victoriously, soon, in the Philippines.

None of us have ever had the slightest doubt as to the eventual outcome of the war. We knew that America could and would whip Japan in the Orient.

But the deplorable lack of organized and alert preparedness here in the Philippines, before the outbreak of the war, the negligence in having so few planes and then having what planes we had destroyed before they could get off the ground, the determined, large scale invasions by the Japanese at so many points, and the seemingly unavoidable delay in the appearance of any other aid for our troops, and planes for our pilots, have caused most of us to consider the possibility of complete American evacuation of the Islands and of the settlement of the war elsewhere. Even the bare possibility chilled me for, next to America, my attachment to these Islands is greater than for any other soil.

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In rapid succession of events the Japs won dominion over Davao, Northern Luzon and Southern Luzon. The time came when we evacuated Manila and the Nips moved in. Now, of all the Philippine Archipelago (as far as I have been able to learn) we retain possession only of the province of Bataan, and a smallish bit it is. Possibly our troops are still holding a small strip of Pampanga province, directly north of Bataan.

Words of conveys seemed only empty words, and despairingly few of Uncle Sam's eaglets were seen in the blue. Japanese bombers and pursuits planes soared about, unmolested, in their death-dealing business.

The boys at the front, both white and brown, have been fighting grimly against superior numbers, and the enemy planes zoomed and bombed and strafed with 50-~~mm~~ machine guns with comparatively little danger to themselves. For our boys it has been a well-nigh heart-breaking defense; for us behind the lines it was "help all we could and hope for the best".

But now the prospects seem brighter. Our fighting line has held against great odds for such a period as to greatly weaken the Jap's chances for a quick victory in the Islands (and that is the only kind of a victory they could have hoped for).

And reason tells us that there has to be some foundation for the many good rumors that have sprung into being during the last 72 hours. Following are some of the most persistent ones:

Four hundred American planes in Philippine waters. Upward of a score of Jap bombers caught napping on the ground at Stotsenburg and destroyed by our bombers. Sixty Jap planes destroyed at Davao. Mindanao re-taken by the American forces. The 31st Infantry thrown full force into action on our northern battle line for the first time since the war started. The Jap line is pushed back a few kilometers. Japanese planes wiped out at Nichols Field by our bombers. A force of Marines landed at Lingayen Gulf and now applying, with the aid of our original line, a pincer movement.

An American land movement of troops on Southern Luzon, with a spear head of negro troops, bringing Americans back close to Manila.

And so the ~~if~~ story goes on.

It is true that practically no Jap bombers have flown over this peninsula for close to 72 hours. The guns of Corregidor gave remained quiet for that length of time.

But this morning two Nip planes did fly over, circle and come back. Both they and ourselves were startled when a newly placed AAA battery, about a mile to the south, opened up on them. They bobbed, veered, swung around and skeddaddled for home.

The only guns engaged in the front line battle that we have heard are what are reported to be four 155's, situated about half way between us and the front line, which is about forty kilometers away.

The guns must have been moved into their present position only recently, for their explosive barks have been heard only the past two or three days. We are told that they are throwing their shells over the heads of our ~~Japs~~ forces and on to various salient points in enemy territory.

And here is the end of all reviewing. Henceforth there will be entered in this record only daily, current observations.

January 10, 1941:

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Jan. 10, 1942:

Incidentally, I am forty-one years old to-day.

Gen. McArthur, commanding general of the USAFFE, and his staff rode by the medical supply warehouse where I am working, this morning. I was told that he and his staff moved in here last night from Ceregidor. Upon his ~~my~~ arrival in the battle arena, routine inspection as his trip may be, people immediately began to conjecture if The Big Push Was On!

That battery of 155's was pounding again last night. They seemed nearer.

It irritates me beyond measure to contact such a number of pessimistic trouble forecasters about the camp. (Interrupting my personal diatribe on "wet blankets", I pause to note that an unidentified plane just passed overhead. The warning signal sounded. A few men scuttled for fox holes. I tried to train some binoculars on the plane, but it had passed on before I could focus the glasses. The AAA's are sounding off to the south, so it must have been an enemy craft. It appeared to be an observation plane).

(Now it is coming back overhead).

To go on with my remarks about gloom-spreaders.

While a great majority of the patients and personnel of the hospital are optimistic and "abiding in faith" like jolly good folk, in this time of perversity, it is bitterly disappointing to discover the number of men "abiding in fear and trembling" and almost inviting the worst with their morbid pessimism.

In the last two days three or four privates, two technical sergeants, an officer-patient and another officer have poured dismal improbabilities into my unwilling ears. I've been told a certain personage has prepared a banca form instant flight, and is spouting off about his "courageous facing of 'realities' ". He goes around deriding the optimists as being "whistlers in the dark".

A nurse told me that another person spoke of deserting, running off into the hills, and asked her to go with him.

(The air raid signal has sounded again, and that lone plane is buzzing around. The AAA's have been barking at it all the time.)

The blatant cowardice and pessimism of the minority has so upset my preconceived ideas of the good old American spirit in "battle duress" that I have been casting about in my own mind ~~for~~ for such an explanation that might suffice for my own reasoning.

And I have concluded as follows:

Some men becoming wounded or sick in battle are bound to become morbid. That element is concentrated in a hospital.

Some men join the medical department, a non-combatant outfit, because they are cowards. That element also becomes concentrated in a hospital.

Surgeons and physicians are of the intellectual type of humans and the mental type are generally the more apt to take a ~~depr~~ the disillusioned view of things. When, as in all groups, a small percentage of "realistic logicians" are fearsome, they are so with a holy vengeance.

Momentarily disregarding the damned good majority of aggressive spirited, stout-hearted Americans on our staff and in our personnel, there is undeniably a certain fusing of undesirable elements hereabouts that invariably present the pessimistic view.

Page Eighteen

Last evening some of the boys were batting and fielding a soft ball. Others, including a captain, were fishing (with not much luck). Certain of the personnel, both masculine and feminine, went strolling through the municipality in mild defiance of orders to the contrary.

That battery of 155's was growling again last night. Airplanes passed over the ~~plaza~~ camp twice before daylight this morning. Jap planes are flying up and down the peninsula now.

Occasionally, when their roar became threateningly close, we mentally reserve space for ourselves in the nearest foxhole. But they leave us alone.

One of the planes was a huge, four motored job. The AAAs are having a field day, but ^{the} Jap has come tumbling down within our sight.

I'll wager that with the increase in Nip bomber activity, we will have an increase in the number of wounded.

I walked lengthwise across the hospital compound last evening, going south. From that boundary I could look across an open field to the quarter-mile section of the highway.

I could also get an excellent view of the southern and south-eastern slopes of Mount Cayapo, directly west of the camp, where the jungle covered sides curved up to the cone-like peak, three thousand feet above the level of the bay.

The traffic on the highway was all military, and it was heavy. Trucks loaded with men, stores or munitions, water wagons, staff cars and messengers on motorcycles. And all of the changing scene veiled with waves of dust.

On the mountain slopes could be seen stray wisps of smoke that indicated small camps of mysterious parties. Probably supply dumps, machine gun nests and AA~~s~~ emplacements.

A herd of caribao browsed peacefully in a field nearby and a couple of the familiar "Juan de la Cruzes" (the taos of the Philippine countryside), were laboring calmly at something or other in a neighboring patch.

I caught a glimpse of a nipa roof, half hidden in a bamboo thicket. A flock, what looked like wild pigeons rose out of a clearing, flew over a growth of jungle and settled again in another open space.

A little later, when dusk was gathering and the cone of the mountain top was limned with rosy cloud wisps, touched by the fingers of the setting sun, beyond toward the China Sea, the bright star of Venus became visible. It shone alone, high above the cone tip.

An unseen player back in the camp drew experimental fingers across the strings of a banjo.

Five native women were brought to a nearby ward last night, from a Filipino hospital in Balanga. Balanga, a town or barrio up near the front lines.

The women had been wounded in a bomber raid occurring there almost a week ago, and have been brought here for better and more sanitary care.

One of them, a young brown girl in her teens, had severe shrapnel wounds and lacerations of the thigh and scalp. After the surgeon here had unwrapped the bandages from the girl's head, ants were found to be crawling about in the open wound.

from a field clearing station, to which they had gone

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Page Nineteen

In Ward # 15 there is a 10-day old baby that was orphaned when her parents were killed in the air raid on the nearby municipality a week ago.

Jan. 18, 1942:

The women who were in Ward # 17 were removed from this hospital last night and taken to a ~~school~~ school house up the line, where an emergency civilian hospital has been set up.

The 155's are growling steadily this morning. They have been most of the night, too. Judging by the sounds, I believe some heavier and smaller guns have been so placed that their blasts have joined the chorus of the first battery.

Since this day's entry was started, the disposal of three refrigerators occupied my attention for about half an hour. In that interim, while the guns were pounding away, a great repercussion of sound reached us, resembling very closely the rapid explosion of a stick of 100-pound bombs.

Immediately afterward, a couple of Japanese bombers passed over.

I imagine that the explanation is that six or more bombs, aimed at the gun emplacements, were the retorts of the Nips to the punishment they have received from the Yankee dogs of war.

We can still hear the guns. So, whatever damage the Japs inflicted has not silenced ~~any~~ them.

For nearly a week now, detachments of Filipino soldiers have been strung along the bay shore of the peninsula every night. I suppose that the purpose is to guard against any attempt the Nips might make to land a rear-action, suicide formation behind our lines.

The platoon that has been coming to the beach of the hospital compound arrives at about 7:00 p.m., each evening, and takes off at about the same hour in the morning.

Their occasional alarms at night, and ~~resultant~~ resultant firing of rifles, add to the current bits of excitement.

A rumor was about yesterday morning that I withheld from this record because of my growing skepticism of new stories. But the belief in the authenticity of this particular story has been growing, so I set it down for what it is worth.

It is that a transport loaded with Allied troops (nationality unreported) tied up at Corregidor docks yesterday; and that General McArthur went aboard to confer with high ranking officer who came on the ship.

Then here's another bit of gossip that we like to believe:

~~Sxxxx~~ A , a Filipino civilian artisan attached to our supply depot here, was talking to a native friend of his, a soldier out of a detachment of engineers.

The soldier told S A last night that, whereas heretofore his group had been destroying bridges to hinder the advance of the Japs, the same group is now engaged in building bridges on the road to Manila, so that USAFFE forces can return to the nation's capital!

The story also runs that General McArthur has stated that the USAFFE will return to the City on the Pasig on February 14!

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Jan. 13, 1942:

Dame Rumor hath it that this is "Der Tag", for both the Americans and the Japanese. A bulletin put out by USAFFE headquarters on January 10 reported that the Japs were preparing for a big drive.

Now, as I hear, this is the day and, also, the Americans are said to be ready to meet the invader's push with a drastic counter drive of their own.

Whatever betides, may the numeral "13" be a lucky one for the Yanks and Gugs!

The guns are muttering to the north. At infrequent intervals there is the heavier, cracking explosion ~~xxx~~ from up there that splits the air all the way back here. They cause these ~~tim~~ bodegas to rumble like a beaten drum.

No knowing the source or cause of these particular blasts.

Two lieutenants (one an M.C. and the other an Air Corp patient), three nurses and five enlisted men (myself one of the five) engaged in a hotly contested though rankly amateurish game of volley ball last evening. Lots of fun and a good workout.

Delving into irrelevant matters, the sight of about a dozen nurses strolling about and gabbing with enlisted men, after working hours last evening, wholly unattended by and seemingly oblivious to commissioned officers, puzzled me. I wonder if either the M.C.s or the A.N.C.s has for some reason or other declared a boycott on the other group?

Up until now the sight of a feminine member of the species unattended by one of the masculine has been a rara avis in terris!

I heard a story in the messhall this morning. True or false, it ~~is~~ made good listening.

Twenty-two tanks came over from the Jap line at the front.

Our 155s put ~~xxx~~ seventeen of them out of commission. The rest of them hightailed it back to home pastures!

Another report stated two American ships were burning in Corregidor waters yesterday.

A messenger reported that practically all of the Municipality of Mariveles, on the southern tip of Bataan and directly across a narrow strip of water from Corregidor, has been demolished by bombs or destroyed by fire. He tells of seeing a statue in a churchyard, about eight feet tall, that remains standing. Its outstretched arms lifts supplicating hands to the heavens above.

An unidentified plane just circled overhead. No booms. No AA's. No runs. No hits.

I know what I am going to spell a word wrong now. No, I just took time out to look it up in a dictionary. A schizophrenic was brought to a nearby ward a couple of days ago.

He is a Visayan from the "Middle Islands", with mind at last totally unhinged by the fright and strain of war conditions. A hopeless, pitiable case.

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Page twenty-one

A Filipino ward attendant suddenly made a sound resembling the zooming drone of a bomber. The insane man became horribly like a badly frightened baboon in his crouching dementia and unintelligible chattering.

That heavy concussion just came again. It is difficult to understand. There is no indication of a plane or of bombing. I can't help but wonder if there is a very heavy gun newly emplaced to the north? Or, it might be a heavy charge of dynamite set off somewhere in the vicinity where they might be clearing ground for a new airfield.

Just heard a cracking good story. I'll not vouch for its being based on facts. But here is the way of it:

A captain from Hospital # 2 just came in with a truck and a crew to haul some flour and sugar back to # 2. A captain friend of his, just back from the front was by his own word an eye witness to what happened.

Thirty Pambusco busses started rolling back from the infantry front lines yesterday afternoon. They came down the main highway, loaded with little, dark-skinned men.

Far back of our infantry lines was the USAFFE artillery line. Observers, watching the front lines, saw the dark-skinned cargo. They assumed that the troops rolling toward them from the distant front were Filipinos being withdrawn from our van positions.

The thirty heavily loaded busses, each following closely behind the other, swiftly rolled deeper and deeper into our territory and closer and closer to the watchers from the various gun emplacements.

An officer, a keener witted man than the current observers, strolled idly up. He inquired regarding the oncoming cavalcade.

When told that a number of Filipino soldiers were being withdrawn from that particular sector of the front line, the erstwhile inquisitive officer exploded into ~~stirring~~ dynamic action.

Exclaiming that that particular sector had been guarded by white troops only, he rapidly trained his own and more powerful glasses on the still distant busses.

Then he sped to a phone connecting with other artillery batteries.

His message ran something like this: "Thirty busloads of Japs have broken through our line to the ~~the~~ front. They are now approaching by ~~the~~ main highway. Suggest that all batteries cooperate with mine. Train gun on approaching objective and withhold fire until signal is given. Signal will be the firing of my own battery."

So, as the story goes, the leading bus came within a certain distance (point blank range) and then the first battery opened up. The others immediately joined in. The guns were trained on the line of busses from several angles, diametrically and laterally, and their holocaust blazed in demonic fury.

When the firing ceased, thirty Pambusco busses were as many utter wreckages and their human freight was only masses of torn, dead and dying bodies.

That's the story I heard.

There have been more wounded brought in this morning than on any other morning of the past several days. But there is as yet nothing to indicate that a major battle is being waged to the north.

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Page Twenty-two

A new female patient came to this hospital last night and was placed in Ward # 17. A Filipina girl with a shrapnel wound in one leg.

There is a story told of a ten year old Filipina girl and her seven year old brother. The two were brought here yesterday. They, with their parents and other members of the family, were in their nipa home. A bomb explosion, death by shrapnel and concussion, and the nipa shack affire. The girl dragged her wounded brother to safety. Now, two orphans, one of them ~~Maya~~ a seven year old tot with a stump where the left arm was.

I heard last night that the "teen" days old baby that is being raised on a bottle in Ward # 15 is an American-Filipina mestiza.

There goes four Filipino litter bearers with a loaded stretcher on their shoulders.

Here comes another similar group.

The tide comes in and the tide goes out, and the bamboo fish traps and decoy lanes, standing in the water near the shore, ^{are killed} by their one-time owners.

The hogs that have survived the bullets of the Constabulary ~~Maya~~ grow lean and lank.

I wonder how the evacuees, the "taos, the ~~swaws~~ and the ninos", are faring in the bundocs, up there on the slopes above us, over toward the China Sea?

I don't think that I have mentioned heretofore that, since coming to Camp Limay, our meals have been a scanty breakfast at 8:00 a.m., a single cup of coffee at noon, and a meal of sorts at 4:00 p.m.

A part of our meals are made up from the small cans of "C" rations. They consist of half pint cans of meat and beans, stew, corned beef hash, hard biscuits, chocolate and coffee compound. They are meant for rationing in the field, but we get them here in the absence of an adequate supply of other foods. Both as ~~nutritive~~ sustaining elements and tasty messes, they are all to the good.

Since the above entry was made has come to me confirmation from an entirely new and different source of the story anent the busloads of Japs being wiped out by artillery fire. The only discrepancy between the two stories is that the second source gave the number of busses as "some" instead of thirty.

A gang came down from Medical Depot, at K.P. # 162, for certain medical department stores. They most important item on their requisition was, 1000 blankets.

I knew all but one of the gang. Those I knew were from Sternberg. One of them, a private first class at Sternberg, is now a staff sergeant. Another, a buck sergeant at Sternberg, later a ~~staff~~ staff, then "tech", is now a warrant officer.

One of them reported that SM _____, a big, young and extremely likable Swede that I had known at Sternberg, was killed near a first aid station on Corregidor. He got it during an air raid in which two others of our old bunch were injured.

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Page Twenty-three

A barge, towed by a tug boat flying an American flag, just passed, going north. Some kind of mounted gun was at the aft end of the barge, and the rest of the space was filled with stores or munitions.

An AAA battery just sounded off and there was the drame of a plane. I am not bothering to go out to see what the score is.

Jan. 14, 1942:

The artillery with in our hearing (all USAFFE) pounded away for about half an hour yesterday evening. Then, with the exception of a brief spell of five or ten minutes this morning, the guns have been silent for about eighteen hours.

The volley ball game went on again at ~~about~~ a merry pace yesterday evening.

Two non-coms found a banca with an outrigger floating loose last evening, and corraled it. They tried their hand at paddling and poling it about over the close-lying shoals when the tide was in. It was fun and awkward labor mixed together for them.

Big fish, apparently about eighteen inches or two feet long, were breaking the water very close to the shore while the fellows were fighting their unfamiliar craft. But these bundles of piscatory tasty morsels don't respond to the bait or lures of the local ~~fishermen~~ amateur (military) fishermen.

I mentioned the fish traps yesterday and noted that their native owners had deserted them. But the scene is changed to-day.

For several taos were out there this morning, stripped to a geestring, with the water anywhere from their knees to their armpits, driving fresh stakes and weaving new bamboo splints.

And I see some children and older girls in and around a few of the nipa huts, across the lagoon.

Word has come through that the Jap line to the north has been pushed back again. But there is nothing to indicate that any unusual action is going on at the front.

Our particular Hawkshaw of Camp Limay prowls about by day and by night, searching, ever searching for spies, fifth columnists, saboteurs, infernal machines, hidden mines, high explosives, flares and any other agents or agencies of the devil. (At this stage of the world's progress - - or is it progress? - - His Satanic Majesty not only has horns and a tail, but his skin is yellow, his eyes aslant and he hisses when he "esses").

Our Hawkshaw's alias is Private First Class R. He is the chap who went over the hill, got as far as Borneo and then turned back. He reported in to his outfit at Fort Wm. McKinley just before the outbreak of the war.

Now he is the official and unbelievably officious private spier outer of our present post.

Last night, while a number of non-coms were sitting around in the dark shooting the breeze, in the medical supply warehouse, Hawkshaw materialized in front of us in his own inimitable, startling fashion. His shadowy substance was dripping with the essence of poison to dark deeds

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and clairvoyant knowledge of dastardly plots.

He demanded to know if any of us were sergeants. A staff sergeant inadvertently responded and Very Special Agent R_____ immediately commandeered the services of the four striper.

He was excitedly impatient and harried unmercifully with the grave matters of his office, and loath to reveal the reason that he required the help of a non-com of the first three grades.

But, finding the staff sergeant a bit rebellious at being arbitrarily ordered about by a private first class, he decided to humor the s.s. and us and let us in on his portentously important business.

With infinitely more gracious condescension than The Hawkshaw ever deigned to squander on the moronic Watson, he told us insignificant non-coms know that he, in his personal, confidential services for Commanding General McArthur, he had, alone and unaided, ferreted out and accumulated into one large basket a box of flares, a keg of dynamite or black powder, a wireless and receiving set, and innumerable other cans filled with the devil's own private concoctions. The entire lot was to be made instrumental by the Mephistolean underlings of His Great Horned Majesty to blast us all to Kingdom Come.

In spite of our soul-calloused state of incredulous unbelief, we were impressed.

We knew that there was such a thing as a Jap, and we knew that the Jap and his brothers were fervently desirous of the removal of members of our race from the vale of tears and sorrow.

There had been enough violent explosions in our immediate vicinity in the recent past to win our grudging respect for the power of black powder and what not.

So the staff sergeant agreed to go and guard the basket of potential death and destruction while R_____ went to find a permanent and suitable guard for it.

The s.s. crouched over the collection of infernal tokens, trying in the darkness to make out the details of weapons of horror. But all he could see was a dark jumble of cans and paraphernalia.

Presently R_____ returned, bringing a Filipino soldier who was already scared half to death by R_____ 's dark, brooding, mysterious manner.

And our Hawkshaw increased the trembling fright of the little brown brother when, with fistent finger jabbing at the sentry's nose, the Great One Man Secret Service instructed him to shoot to kill any man who might come anywhere near the basket.

And "Joe" was not the only poor fellow who was worried.

Most of us fellows, if we left the warehouse at all during the night, ran the risk of giving the terror stricken sentry the impression that we were suicidally intent on getting near that basket.

So we ventured abroad with extreme care and caution that night.

This morning, in the full light of day, we dared to approach and to inspect the load of deadly stuff.

There was a dilapidated battery receiving set that was too ancient to ever squeak again, a large, black can filled with paint lead, two dozen small cans of enamel paint (made in Hongkong), and old ship's chronometer and perhaps eight flares of the kind that ships use to signal at sea.

Some native desk hand could have filched the lot from a ship which he might have sailed on.

The flares, dangerous, of course, in wrong hand a in war time, had been probably been destined to serve as fun-producers of holidays.

So endeth the tale of Dangerous Daniel _____.

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Twice to-day squadrons of Jap bombers have been active hereabouts. This morning, around nine o'clock, fifteen planes, flying three to a group, came directly over the hospital from the northeast, flying high. When they had reached directly over a point ~~directly~~ perhaps four miles south, each group in turn made beautiful, seemingly almost vertical dives downward toward some objective unknown to us, loosed their hell-raising eggs then, climbing upward in powerful zooms, coursed their way back into the northeast sky.

For some unexplicable reason our AA's were uniformly silent. All that we heard was the mighty droning of airplane engines and the rapid booming of bombs.

Then again, at 1:30 p.m., we heard the guttural growling of the AA's off in the distance, on The Rock.

Looking into the sun, we spied eight bombers in a single V formation. They were pushing steadily through an aerial garden of bursting anti-aircraft shells.

Over and under, before and after, and some seemingly in the midst of the silvery, winged tubes, the brownish-white tufts broke and spread.

But the Japs droned on and sailed away, heading toward Manila, eastward across the bay.

Jan. 15, 1942.

Very little air activity since the last mention of bombers. It is now 11:45 a.m.

Our artillery was pounding away at a furious pace for over two hours in the middle of the night.

All is quiet now.

A chap in here from the Casual and Replacement company, a kilometer or two south of here, stated that he knew positively that three Jap bombers were brought down over Corregidor yesterday.

I had occasion to become acquainted with two Filipino customs yesterday.

First: Fishing with a circular net.

The native, wearing only abbreviated shorts (sometimes merely a gee-string), waded along the shore at high tide. Sometimes he ~~is~~ in only so far that the water comes to his calves; at other times the water was about his waist.

This particular native chose a spot where two rows of old piling stood in the water near the beach. Between ~~in~~ and around these posts the fisherman moved with never a squand, stepping so carefully that his legs caused ~~any~~ nary a ripple. At any time no fish without a piscatory sixth sense would have distinguished his dark body from the posts about him.

The little old brown man had a black, fine-mesh, cord net folded over his arms. He was holding the folds of it near where the weights dangled silently.

It was simply a circular webbing, light and easy to handle, except where the three or four inch, thin, cylindrical leaden weights were attached all around the circumference at about six or eight inch intervals. The net was perhaps fourteen feet in diameter, and had a light

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rope attached to the center.

The native watched the water with that limitless patience which is the gift of only the primitive peoples who must need ~~secure~~ secure their food direct from the land or the sea.

But his dark, sharp eyes were ever flashing about, studying the water.

When a school of perhaps twenty small, silvery fish made its appearance near the shore, the fisherman became single-mindedly alert to the seemingly purposeless darting about of the quickly moving school.

When the fish started to approach near to casting distance he carefully raised his thin, sinewy arms, prepared at any instant to make his throw.

When they changed their course and darted to their right or left, he relaxed a bit. But still he was ever watchful.

If the school showed a tendency to depart from that vicinity, out of the water would come the brown man's right foot, the toes clutching a smooth, round rock from the bottom.

With a quick jerk of the leg the stone would be thrown over and beyond the disappearing fish.

For all the world the sound of the stone hitting the water was like the breaking of the surface by a large fish.

Frantically the score or more of little ones would come streaking back.

At last the school was in the proper spot.

With amazing speed and dexterity the Filipino whirled the weighted net once about his head and made his cast. It hit the water completely spread out and the leaden weights dragged the outer edges of the circular net quickly to the bottom.

The native stood silently, relaxed for a moment. Then, voicing some doggerel in his native tongue that might well have been thanks to a certain deity in his pantheon of gods, he grasped more firmly the cord. It led to the center of the net lying on the bottom of the shoal.

While pulling slowly, evenly on the cord, he muttered at intervals what might have been humble prayers for a good catch.

The weighted circumference dragged along the bottom, lessening steadily in diameter as the fisherman gathered in the net over his shoulder. When the net was entirely out of the water it once again laid in folds and coils over the shoulder of the brown man.

~~But~~ its weight was heavier, for within those folds and coils were imprisoned pieces of debris from the sandy-silt bottom, and ~~struggling~~ struggling little tidbits that struggled utterly in vain.

On the beach the man dropped his net and proceeded to clear it of its contents.

Stones, lumps of mud, rotten pieces of wood, wire, cans--all debris he threw ~~away~~ aside. Fish too small for his woman's liking he tossed back into the water.

Remaining were eight or ten fish of his catch. They resembled very much the silvery sardines consumed by the American public. These he added to the thirty or forty in a basket that had been netted in previous casts.

And once again he commenced a patient stalk, in and around the piles.

Before I had finished the above story of the fisherman, I was called to the operating pavilion to give 500 cubic centimeters of B-type blood, for a transfusion to help a wounded soldier.

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While over there I saw that every one of the seven operating tables, occupied by war casualties. The staff of officers, nurses and corpsmen were ~~six~~ working at top speed.

One chap lying on a table had his lower jaw shot away.

Another had had a bullet enter his right eye, pass through his brain and come out the back of his head. The bullet had spread in its passage through ~~xxx~~ his head, carrying away, destroying or damaging two-thirds of his brain. (and one not entirely blessed)

By some strange, freakish miracle, the man will live. But in the main it will be a living body without a mind that will be returned from "fields of glory" to the folks back home.

It is a trite expression, but I am impelled to ask, "What Price Glory?"

Now for the other native custom: The lechon feast.

Last night the camp mess sergeant (a master sergeant) and I were guests at a lechon feast. In words comprehensible to all it was a dinner of which the main item was roast pig.

A lechon feast in a native community in peace time would mean a barbecued young pig, spitted upon a bamboo pole and suspended over a fiery pit out in the open. The pig would be roasted to perfection and then served with rice and all the fixin's, to natives gourmands crouching on their haunches in the firelit darkness.

Last night, in an army field hospital during wartime, with blackout rules rigidly enforced, our feast of the pig was somewhat different. The Filipino staff sergeant in charge of the native mess was the host.

He had bought the four months old pig, ~~slaughtered~~ killed, drawn and cleaned outside of the post. Then the whole pig went into the oven of the stove in the native mess.

Bountiful supplies of rice, rich gravy, native bread and other tidbits were prepared.

Then, behind closed and sealed windows, by the light of three candles stuck into empty tin cans, the pig, wondrously roasted and cut into pieces easy to handle, was served.

The native sergeant, his three cooks, ten Filipino nurses and we two Americans crowded around the festive board, and little any one cared about jostling elbows.

There was army silverware for all, but, when knives and forks sometimes became inadequate, fingers were put to one of their original uses--that of carrying savory, rich food to open mouths.

No fooling, I enjoyed that meal.

The American mess sergeant and I this morning financed the purchase of another pig for the next lechon feast.

Native laborers are busy to-day erecting ~~the~~ barbed wire entanglements along the beach.

Searchlights play out over the water at night, from the bay shore.

No one on the peninsula particularly wants to see a bunch of Nips land anywhere on our beaches, and the powers that be are taking necessary steps to see that they do not.

There have been two attempts by the enemy to land comparatively small forces by the beach route. Both occurred at night. Both times light artillery and machine guns have changed the minds of those Japs who, after the shooting, had minds left to be changed.

The day has already passed that was set by Gen. McArthur as being the day when the skies would be black with our plans. (But his announce-

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ment did serve the extremely useful purpose of keeping all our spirits on the up and up during the days that have passed. And now we are growing inured to the game that we are playing.)

Still, even the sight of just one American pursuit plane would set our hearts to thumping.

Lt. G _____, ex-manager of the Army Morgue in Manila, now in charge of Graves Registration behind our fighting lines (and a busy man is Lt. G _____), brought to this camp a huge turtle that must have weighed over 200 pounds and a half dozen very large fish. He "finagled" them somewhere up the coast.

This afternoon we will dine on turtle steaks. ~~Xi~~ To-morrow it will be fresh salt water fish.

Several quarters of caribao meat were brought this morning for the hospital messes. Our canned and boxed stores are getting low, but, to-day and to-morrow, we eat.

And I'm not forgetting that lecture feast that I am scheduled to attend in the near future.

An auxiliary operating room is being set up in Ward # 1. It is there where the gas gangrene victims are kept; and on that operating table legs and arms will be amputated in sometimes a hopeless retrenchment against the most deadly of battle casualty complications.

Another ~~mix~~ surgery, for minor cases, is being set up elsewhere to-day, to relieve the growing pressure of work on the main pavilion.

I heard that the supply of sulfathiazole, one of the prime requisites in modern warfare surgery, is growing small on this peninsula.

Authentic news of a relief convoy will be welcome hereabouts.

Jan. 16, 1942:

All off yesterday and last night the patients kept coming in. The operating pavilion was a terribly busy place. And right now two ambulances full of patients are standing in front of the Receiving office.

At about seven-thirty this morning five planes passed overhead. It is a cloudy morning and the light was too poor to discern the markings on the planes. But they were flying so low as to be easy targets for the AAs, and no shot was fired. engines

They dropped no bombs. Their ~~mix~~ sounded distinctly different from the airplane engines that we have been hearing. And, as far as we know, they came from the southern end of the peninsula, for ~~we~~ heard them only as they came from that direction.

So it is quite possible that they ~~mix~~ were our planes.

Another lone plane flew over about fifteen minutes later and the AAs gave them what for.

An air corps Captain who was in camp last night said that the next forty-eight hours (from last evening) would embrace the turning point of the Battle of Batan. He declared himself willing to bet any man any amount that we would be in Manila by January 28th.

A large banca with a load of fish was brought to our beach last evening. All of the messes are having fish to-day.

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There are four messes: One, the American patients' mess. This mess also furnishes all the food and "nourishments" to the hospital's bed patients. Two, The Filipino patients' mess, which also serves the members of the native corpsmen's detachment. Three, our own American detachment's mess. Four, the nurses' and officers' mess. The Filipino nurses are "rationed" at the last named one.

It is a murky day. Dirty gray clouds are hanging low. The bay is not blue this morning. Rather, it a sullen green, flecked with brown and white froth.

A fitting natural setting for the human cruelties set loose on Bataan peninsula.

Two o'clock in the afternoon:

The murkiness of the day ~~xxxx~~ has passed.

The sky is nearly filled with fleecy white clouds, with small patches of azure blue showing here and there.

Of Cayapo, our mountain, only the tip is hidden by snow whiteness. But the bay is still more green than blue.

Several times to-day enemy bombers have flown over. The AAs on Corregidor have been busy occasionally.

A staff sergeant from the operation pavilion was just over for a hundred more hand towels. He said that the pavilion had put through fifty-four cases so far ~~today~~ to-day.

And, of course, that indicates only the major operative cases. Minor surgical cases pass through the new first aid station, and fever and dysentery cases are admitted directly to the wards.

Three busloads of convalescents were transferred to Hospital # 2 this morning.

The gas gangrene ward surgery amputated three legs last night.

A case of spinal meningitis was discovered yesterday.

More men have been added to the burial squad.

Thirteen transfusions were given during the last twenty-four hours.

Jan. 17, 1942:

I have a new job this morning. I was taken from Medical Supply and put in charge of of the corpsmen in the wards, and a few in other departments.

I noticed this morning that the wards are rapidly filling up again.

Nip planes flew over early this morning. Our AAs to the south were busy.

The rumor is rife this morning that a great number of American planes flew over the bay this morning. As yet there is no verification.

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Some American P-40s were actually seen at close range, though. Three of them flew over here a short while ago.

Dec. 18, 1942:

I went out yesterday afternoon in a touring car driven by a Filipino driver, on business bent for this hospital. The business took me as far as twenty-two kilometers, and we spent three hours driving back and forth between motor pools, first aid stations, food dumps and Hospital # 2.

While at the southern end of the peninsula, on the bay side, two Japanese bomber raids in that vicinity, accompanied by a holocaust of anti-aircraft fire, enlivened my first experience off this post since my arrival here.

Coming back late in the evening, we passed up a calvacade of 37-millimeter guns, their crews, and supply trucks.

While over in that neck of the woods, a stick of bombs made their whistling song of death near enough so that we hit the dust with amazing alacrity.

M.P. patrols stopped us a couple of times and gave us a close once-over.

The highway is a busy thoroughfare. It is all army traffic except for an occasional native pedestrian.

Here and there I caught glimpses of Filipino civilians who are sticking to their nipa huts and to their barrios.

Honesty forces me to admit that we here at Hospital # 1 probably have the cleanest spot, the more clothes, and generally the better living conditions of any people on the peninsula. We simply are not experiencing the same conditions of war that the others are facing.

Even at Hospital # 2, lying as it does at the end of a narrow, rutted, winding lane, down in a valley in the midst of engulfing bamboo thickets, the dust, the insects, the jungle and its inhabitants make it impossible to maintain any reasonable standard of hospital sanitation.

And the soldiers along the highway and at the various stations are literally camping out. Shaves, baths and changes of clothes are rare luxuries. (I am not mentioning the browns and whites of the fighting line ~~but~~ there can be no comparison drawn. Mention of them is not a comparison, it is a contrast).

There has been nothing further to verify the story of the 150 American planes supposed to have been seen yesterday. It shows how ~~quickly~~ keyed up we are to impressions and how quick to imagine. A flock of ducks or geese are seen in the distance--and our bombers are over Luzon!

Rumors of an approaching convoy are flying about again.

I accompanied a busload of men returned to duty from this hospital, up to the Casual and Replacement Company's camp this morning. Back to war they go.

The Philippine Army litter bearers here have been replaced by civilian laborers. A part of the P.A. men have been assigned as wardmen. Others will be given various jobs.

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No sound of artillery this morning. No bombers.

Some one in the Sick and Wounded office told me just now that the hospital is averaging seven or eight deaths every twenty-four hours. They estimate that for every death here there are thirty on the front. They have no ~~way~~ means to make an accurate estimate and the figure they give is probably too high.

Our graveyard is just beyond the village. I passed another at Hospital # 2 yesterday.

Jan. 19, 1942:

Another day starting off much the same as other days have gone, as far as peninsular affairs are concerned. Air activity and bombardment noises seen less than those of several days previously.

But the wards are filling up to capacity again. One of the wards that has been temporarily closed is open once more this morning.

-four

Thirty Phil. Army corporals were pulled off duty here to-day and are transferred to Hospital # 2. That leaves the wards here short of help, but the staff at # 2 is fast getting more work than they can possibly handle alone.

I accompanied another busload of "duty's" to the Casual camp this morning.

Because of the shortage of men I will probably be given a new job this morning.

Two-thirty-five p.m.:

Still on the same job.

The wards were in bad shape this morning. With the advice of the Detachment Commander, men were pulled out of all the messes, the Medical Supply, bakery, laundry and Receiving office and placed on duty in the wards.

Two staff sergeants are mopping floors and carrying bedpans now, and are doing it cheerfully and willingly.

A chap who left here and became attached to "C" Company of the 60th C.A.C. of Corregidor, dropped by this morning. He reported that four Nip bombers were brought down in the air raid occurring over The Rock a couple of days ago. That was the day I was over near there. (The score of Jap planes brought down is mounting, but it has never been my pleasure to see one "shot on the wing".)

He also told of an American pilot whose plane was shot down behind the Nip #1 lines. The pilot bailed out and was about to land in Jap territory with his parachute.

When he neared the ground Jap snipers opened up on him and riddled him with bullets.

(To qualify this story: the chap who told it is quite a fabricator).

Six Philippine nurses were transferred to Hospital # 2 this morning.

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Six American corpamen are going around with long faces. § Their "South Sea Island Romances" (largely imagined on the part of the boys) are shot all to hell.

We Yanks think we are kidding the little Filipino nurses. But the fact is that the diminutive "Alomas" are actually catching the point, twisting it about and sending it back with a merry ha-ha. Out of respect for my little brown sisters, I can't call it the horse laugh.

Caribao are being butchered on this post now, to furnish meat for the messes. How much circumstances are influencing my tastes I do not know, but the fact remains that this brand of caribao is good stuff.

Jan. 20, 1942:

And still the calm continues for us behind the front. The sky was empty of planes yesterday. No artillery was heard.

This may be because the USAFFE boys have pushed the Nips back; and the guns could have moved farther north, out of hearing range.

live

But while we are in comparative safety, our chaps up there facing the yellow men are continuing to catch big doses of bitter hell. Irregular meals, and the ones they do get far from being Christmas feasts. Bullets, shells, shrapnel, strafing and ~~xxxx~~ bombs from planes--all combine to spare them ever a dull moment.

(Rather ghastly humor, mayhap, but what would you have? Morbidity ~~xxx~~ or melodrama is not going to help them a damn bit.)

Yesterday we ran a couple of errands again, down the line. Brought back tanks of carbon dioxide, boxes of sulfanilamide and sulfathiazole, and two quarts of good whiskey. It is possible that the amber colored ~~fix~~ fire water can not be evaluated as highly as the other items, in the rebuilding of torn bodies. But, man dear, the couple of slugs that I had were priceless as far as my personal morale is concerned.

We drove as far as Navy headquarters, making a stop at the peninsular office of Headquarters, Philippine Department.

The navy officers and men warmed the cockles of this old heart of mine with their open-handed friendliness and genuine spirit of ~~firm~~ helpfulness. Good fellows, all. I was reminded of my own brief cruise with the bluejackets, back when the world was young.

Starting at K.P. § 170 and ending at the construction yard where Navy headquarters are, is the Zigzag Trail. The name is perfectly applicable in a literal sense. For the highway starts at Little Baguio, at the top of the Trail, and makes a score or so of hairpin turns around "peninsulas" of mountain rock before it gets down the five~~x~~ hundred or so feet of altitude to the navy's spot. All the way down the outer edge of the road is guarded by a dried mud wall.

It was on this wall, after swinging around one turn, that we saw a sextette of little, wild monkeys squatting on their haunches, watching the passing traffic. One could just see in their little old faces, the grave compassionate sympathy they felt for their remote relatives that were so frantically and so dumbly racing up and down the hill, hell-bent on the destruction of their own species.

We went as far down the line as to catch a glimpse of Corregidor through the trees. The Rock is still there, quite intact.

I didn't see Mariveles (or the spot where Mariveles once stood).

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The only serious danger I encountered on the drive was the risk of a wreck or that of being capsized. The young American driver had the impulses of a Rickenbacker and the driving skill of a babe in arms.

Three p.m.

Went as guard on two trips to-day. First, with the casuals to the Casual and Replacement company's camp.

Second, with a busload of litter patients to Hospital # 2. Browsed about and shook hands with a number of Ex-Sternbergers.

There are about 1100 patients there to-day. Forty more corpsmen came from Fort Mills, Corregidor, to help the staff carry the load.

There are three or four tents there, sheltering the laboratory, the operating pavilion and one other department. All of the rest of the hospital has the dome of the sky for a roof, encroaching bamboo clumps for walls and a layer of fine dust for a floor. As Sgt. F _____ used to say, "Plenty rough, lad, plenty rough!"

Another ward re-opened here to-day. Of patients we also have plenty.

I bought four coconuts to-day for forty centavos, near Hospital # 2. (That dies centavos la coconut price is simply war profiteering by a tao. But more power to him. He's probably got a new nipa shack to build, because of the ~~war~~ war.)

Just had a cup of coconut milk. Likable stuff.

There is a scarcity of rumors these days. It is just mostly grin and bear it. We have grown tired of conjecturing about American planes, convoys, etc.

But I'm still an optimist about the idea of having a victory dinner in Manila pretty damn soon.

January 22, 1942:

Was too busy yesterday to get around to this record.

Was on the road most of the day. Took a truck to Motor Pool #3 to exchange it for another.

Had the devil's own time in getting a truck to replace ours. (Our truck was an ~~ex~~ excellent one, a special built job, commandeered by the department's chief of transportation for ~~xxxxxxx~~ some important work on The Rock). The Motor Pool captain damned near wept on my shoulder while telling me his tale of woe.

All transportation vehicles are wearing out. Storage batteries are losing their retentive power. Bodies of trucks are being broken and smashed.

I know, myself, as I have been spending a considerable lot of time on the road, that in every kilometer of highway there is at least one wreck, lying turned turtle in the ditch. The quartermaster or engineer corps go along and push off the road every car or truck that breaks down and is no longer serviceable. They must not clutter up space and obstruct the ever flowing stream of supplies and men.

In the night driving, with every one speeding along without lights, it is a marvel that so few accidents occur. 36

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About ten truckloads of pelay (unthreshed rice) passes us last night, going to some rice mill of the south end of the peninsula. That meant that somewhere north of here, near the fighting line, taos are busy with their rice harvest regardless of the death and destruction ~~was~~ raging nearby.

The mention of rice reminds me of the story of the American captain who laid all day with his head in a rice shock, midway between the two firing lines, from morning 'til night.

He got his in the form of a 50-calibre machine gun bullet, low in the belly, at about nine o'clock in the morning. While he was lying there the Japs came over, in a transient wave, and stopped to give him the once over.

He was, of course, very seriously injured, but he consciously exaggerated his condition, and played to part of a dying man.

Because of that, the Mips did not waste the energy or the cost of a bayonet thrust or a bullet. But they did strip him of his pants, drawers and shoes to replenish their own wardrobe. (His shirt was too bloody for their taste. His helmet they took.)

When they Mips had moved back again to their first position, the wounded captain inched himself back a couple of yards to a rice shock.

The sun, and, mind, it is a tropical sun, beat down on the exposed lower half of his body. During the long daylight hours there developed a beautiful case of dangerous sunburn.

The flies and the ants had a field day on his mutilated midsection, and the blood oozed slowly but generously to feed the insatiable insects.

Three inches above his nose (the same nose that was thoroughly tickled by chaff for ten hours) the rice stalks were clipped off slick as a whistle by the vari-calibered bullets flitting back and forth and hither and yon.

Came nightfall and the choice of three ways to die. 1. Lie there and expire. 2. Crawl eight hundred yards over stubble, projecting roots and rough terrain, through the vines and the ~~brush~~ brush. 3. Stand up and walk, in spite of his riddled guts, and take it the clean way - - bullets "snuffing out the light".

So he stood up and started to walk.

And one of the infinitely rare miracles that make good talk around camps came to pass.

With one hand stemming the flow of blood from the freshly opened wound, and the other pushing aside the vines and branches, he walked eight hundred yards through fairly heavy fire, to the USAFPA lines, answered a sentry's abrupt challenge, and fainted.

Now ~~is~~ he is a convalescent in Ward # 15.

Then there is the story of the sailor, as he told it to me while he was lying on a litter enroute to #2.

He was aboard the U.S.S. Canopus, a submarine tender, now lying in Mariweles harbor, just across the channel from Corregidor.

She was crippled by a bomb at Cavite, at the outbreak of the war. She limped across the bay to Mariweles, lying to there so that her crew could turn to at beach patrol at night.

She was always completely abandoned in the day time, when the boats fell the heaviest in those waters; and she carried only a skeleton crew aboard her at night.

One night another bomb hit her. It went through five decks and exploded in the shaft alley.

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Our particular sailor was in that shaft alley, with a ship mate, making certain repairs.

A flying chunk of shrapnel ripped off his arm at the elbow, and other pieces of steel and iron tore into the body of his buddy.

With blood spurting from his ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ severed arm arteries, and terribly stunned from the concussion, he wound his good arm around the waist of his friend, and started ~~for~~ climbing ladders.

He staggered and fought his way up through five decks to topside and collapsed, without realizing, in his dazed condition, that he had been carrying a ~~XXXXXX~~ bloody corpse.

Here's some more dope that is pretty straight: Sixty "half-track" tanks are scattered along sixty-odd kilometers of bay shore, to help the beach patrol forces in case of an attack from the bay. Nine eight-inch guns are being emplaced along the same line.~~ka~~

And the speedy transfer of patients from this hospital to # 2 goes on. Litter patients, amputations, convalescents and ambulatories-- anybody--everybody--all who can be moved and some who cannot stand the moving are being evacuated southward.

January 24, 1942: (Late in the evening)

Since the immediately foregoing paragraph was written, some fifty-five hours have elapsed and much has occurred.

The greater part of the personnel, five hundred or more patients, the entire equipment of fifteen wards, operating room, minor surgery, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ dental clinic, headquarters, laboratory, bake shop and two of the messes--all have been evacuated.

Most of the medical supplies in two warehouses and a considerable amount of food stores have been moved. ~~thirty-~~

The five hundred and more patients and ~~XXXXXX~~-five corpsmen, with some of the officers and nurses, were moved eighteen kilometers to Hospital # 2. (About twenty of the patients, too seriously wounded and weakened to stand the rough trip, died on the way or after they had reached the other place.) Perhaps a dozen would have died anyway. The chance had to be taken on the others, because, apparently, the evacuation is absolutely necessary.)

We who do not know doubt that we are moving because our front lines ~~XX~~ are breaking.

~~X~~ We believe it to be one or two other reasons, or a ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ combination of them, that contribute to our rapid move.

1. In order to even up our bombardment power with that of the Nips, which heretofore has been so terribly one-sided, because of the Nip's air superiority. The USAFFE line may be withdrawing to a point south where the big guns of Corregidor can toss their tons of shells and shrapnel over on to the heads of the Jap troops.

2. To shorten our beach's vulnerability. The menace of a bay shore landing on the part of the Nips seems to grow more serious, and a southward withdrawal on our part will lessen the beach mileage we will have to guard.

And then, of course, there is the additional consideration that the less area we have to cover on the peninsula, the less expenditure of energy and mechanical ~~XXXX~~ force.

All of the hospital equipment and some of the personnel have gone to Little Baguio, about twenty-eight kilometers south. A large dispensary and first aid station have been there, and the place is being expanded into

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a major surgery and evacuation hospital.

The rest of us left here and what remains of the equipment will probably be moved to Little Baguio tomorrow.

The job of moving was a tremendous one. We continued to admit and transfer patients, and had to exert additional time and energy to the gigantic task of moving. But the job is practically done now.

Every man and woman on the post contributed their full share to the work, but the main credit must be given to a navy officer. He is the detachment commander, the mess officer and the assistant adjutant. The last named office carries with it the obligation of getting out and getting things done. And that is just what he did. He is one stout fella, is Lieutenant F_____.

I had lost so much sleep during the ^{preceding} two nights that when I went to bed this last night, at one a.m., I fell headlong into an unbreakable slumber. And thereby lost the chance of hearing first hand an exciting and interesting experience. But there were plenty of fellows to tell me about it this morning.

There were some craft of some kind, carrying an undetermined number of Japs, heading this way from the direction of Manila. They were a kilometer or so off shore when the big reception was given them.

Two powerful searchlights, one from Corregidor and the other from a peninsular headland to the south, played their powerful beams over the Japanese, their boats and their barges.

The big guns of Corregidor went into action (for the first time, perhaps, since the war started). Smaller guns emplaced nearby began pumping their shots across the water.

Two ~~half-tracks~~ half-track tanks clankety-clanked up the road, across the beach, into position, and their fifty-caliber machine guns began their heavy chattering.

The big shells from The Rock were the most impressive. The rushing, terrifying who-o-o-sh of their passage could be heard from here, and their ker-whumps at landing was something to write home about.

Fragments of Nips and boat timbers, and great geysers of water made a kaleidoscopic rising and falling picture in the shifting illumination of the searchlights streaming across the water.

The guns of the shoreline added their ear-spitting roaring to the cataclysm, and their deluge of shells and bullets joined in the fearful extermination of the Japs.

No one here knows the extent of the damage suffered by the enemy. But eventually the din of firing ceased and the searchlights were turned off, once more to return to their half hour flashes.

This morning the surface of the bay was clear of all life, and lightsome whitecaps danced serenely in the sun.

It seems incredible that I could have slept through the show, but that fact stands.

But I did get to see something that happened at about 5:00 p.m., yesterday.

I was "pushing" a gang of men at the bakery, which stands very close to the beach. We were loading stoves, etc., to be hauled to our new home.

We would pause occasionally to watch a barge, towed by a tug, and a mosquito boat that frisked about the other two.

The craft were USAFFE, hugging the shoreline on their way up to a point near the front lines.

Until they had nearly passed this point, the event was without excitement.

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But suddenly the drone of bombers snapped us out of our idle curiosity. Searching the skies we saw two bombers, flying low, coming in off the bay, headed straight for the craft. (And, because of that, they were also headed straight for us).

We did some heading ourselves, for foxholes, faster than ever a town of prairie dogs dove for their underground tunnels when a hawk starts to drop.

But, like prairie dogs who, once secure in their holes, stick their noses out to quench their unquenchable curiosity, we, ~~staying~~ crouching in our pits, also raised our heads to watch the show.

The drone of the Jap bombers grew rapidly in volume. The droning became a roaring.

When the two planes, up about two thousand feet, were within good range the AAs close by started their angry, deep barking. Soon after the heavy machine guns all around us joined the indignant, protesting chorus. But the two light bombers raced cleanly, nearer, through the hot blasts.

The mosquito boat, in a desperate race for life, sprinted away in an amazing burst of speed. But on her little stern deck crouched three men, keeping a heavy caliber machine gun chattering in vicious anger.

Then the two Jap bombers started their ~~xxxix~~ dives, one immediately behind the other.

Motors roaring, propellers and ailerons screaming, down they came at terrific speed.

The tug and the barge just kept on moving, slowly, helplessly. They and their defenseless crews were entirely at the mercy of the down-rushing killers. Not a chance of escaping.

We terrified, horror-stricken watchers, crouching in our foxholes, held our breaths or muttered profane prayers.

The plane leading the other loosed two eggs and we saw them fall. A second was an eternity.

Those two bombs missed, and two great spouts of water spouted upward. Great, heart-wracking gasps of relief turned into strained inhalations as the next plane dropped its pair of blasters.

Two more great geysers of water and we yelled like madmen.

The roar of us in our planes drowned our yells. They straightened out over our heads and zoomed up into the sky. Dipping their left wings, they wheeled, circled, returned and dove again.

The ~~xx~~ gunfire became a deafening holocaust, but the bombers bore an ~~xxxxx~~ unholy charm.

Straight for the tug and its tow, in hellishly superb dives, the two sleek air devils brought their roaring death messages at lightning speed.

But a second time four geysers of water spurted high above the surface of the bay, and still the two craft plowed slowly northward.

Some of us in our beach foxholes left our places of safety, dancing ~~xx~~ and yelling in our excited exultation.

The third act was an anti-climax. The fire from the ground was just as heavy, the double dive of the bombers was just as terrifying, but they released no ~~xxxxx~~ bombs.

Obviously they saw that they had again wrongly gauged their distance, overshot their target, and they held on to their eggs. And it might have been the heat of the AA fire that caused them to abandon the game and race away.

'Twould be a masterpiece if I had the knowledge and the genius to describe the sensations experienced by the men who rode those two craft!

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January 26, 1962: (Late in the evening).

We pill-rollers do not walk into the cannon's mouth and most of us come out of wars with a whole skin. We cannot howl about the dangers we are exposed to, but if anyone should happen to walk up and ask me, I can unhesitatingly tell a man that that we on the "Emdee" were long on labor. In spots, at least.

For five days and for the greater part of five nights I have been working at a pace and with an intensity entirely incompatible with my love of leisure.

But there is the satisfaction of having been a part of a crew that pulled off a big job.

We are moved, now, and are fairly established here at Little Bagulo.

L.B. is, I believe, at the highest point running on this side (the eastern side) of Bataan peninsula. Southward, down nine kilometers of the Zigzag Trail and a straightaway, lies the site of Mariveles, one of the municipalities that the Nips have wiped out. Across the Mariveles bay is The Rock.

If it were not for the thickets and the towering trees crowning this hill top of ours, we could look about us and see Corregidor, the great bay, buildings of Cavite and Manila, the mountains to the south in Batangas and Cavite provinces, the China Sea to the west, between Mariveles Mountain to the northwest and the final promontory to the southwest, and the ~~mountain~~ forest covered slopes of our own peninsula.

As it is, a climb into a tall tree here, where a watch tower is built, can give one that view, or views. On one evening soon I'll be clambering up to that platform.

Four P-40s played tag over our heads this morning. Men of Hdqtrs company, 803 Engineer Corps, bivouaced near here, tell us that there are over 40 P-40s lying hidden on an airfield not far from here, and that three or more are coming in every night from Somewhere.

The story goes that they are being held in secret until the day (may it be soon) that our convoy enters the nearby dangerous waters and will need air protection.

With others of our detachment I am quartered in an open shed affair, roofed with galvanized tin, and which has two decks of split bamboo flooring.

I am sitting on bed springs and a mattress, placed on the second level of bamboo, and can look out over the ~~ground~~ underbrush to a clearing where a band of Filipino civilian laborers are camped. They are attached to the Engineers.

Down below on the other side, on the bank of a deep gully or arroyo, and sheltered by huge trees, some of our boys are cussing and singing under outdoor showers.

Showers are godsend these days. The camp is dusty. The trees and bushes are covered with dust. The air is filled with dust. And the highway close at hand is forever swathed in a pall of dust. We eat, breath and work in dust and, every night, under the showers, we wash off several layers of dust.

But we cannot and do not complain. Because scores of times every day we see poor devils coming in from the fronts with their gaping wounds filled with that same kind of dust, and they have not had a shower to luxuriate under for days and weeks.

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And their bodies are the bodies of the men who have been holding that damn line up there. So we corporamen and the nurses wash those blasted bodies, and there is nary a protest.

They say that the 31st Infantry, U.S. Army, and the 45th and 57th Infantries of the Philippine Scouts are the ones taking it on the chin up there. About one third of the 31st are killed or wounded and even more of the two Scout regiments have fallen.

Our white and brown boys are taking a terrific beating, and holding the line in spite of it all.

I hope some guy asks Congress some day, after all the shouting dies down, why those chappies did not have American air support, and why they had to stick fast on the face of uninterrupted Jap dive bombing and strafing.

Reprts reached here that the Municipality of Limay and its adjacent woods and the hospital buildings that we so recently evacuated were bombed to-day. I heard that the warehouse that I personally moved out of last night now lies a twisted pile of wreckage. (The huge red crosses marking it as a hospital had been removed).

January 31, 1942:

Several days have passed since the last entry herein, but the peninsular ~~affairs~~ and hospital routine has been little changed save for the events noted as follows:

The USAFFE lines have been withdrawn for strategic purposes, southward about twenty kilometers. By this move we have a shorter line to defend, less beach to patrol, and quicker and shorter communications. Furthermore, we are more closely allied to our base, Corregidor, and its mighty guns.

The Japs landed 300 men three or four days ago a few kilometers around the point from Mariveles.

The Nips entrenched themselves, and it took until yesterday for the guns of Corregidor and some field artillery to wipe them out.

I climbed yesterday to our lookout post here, high in a tall tree, and secured a wonderful view of the bay area and of the China Sea. I saw that we were close to the point of the peninsula and that water surrounds us closely on three sides.

Out in the straits were Ft. Mills (The Rock, or Corregidor), and the lesser forts on their tiny islands. There were Forts Hughes, Drum and Frank.

I voluntarily changed jobs yesterday. In fact, it took a bit of string pulling to have the change made. From assistant 1st sergeant, a nominal job that was too much of a political sinecure since our move to Little Baguio, I have become the utility man in the surgery. I don't know a damn thing about surgery, but am willing to learn, and I am better satisfied while doing something.

I saw some keeno surgery yesterday. One case was where a large piece of shrapnel had split wide open a Filipino's chin. To all appearances the chin was obliterated, but actually it was

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opened up and laid back, with the bone knock out.

A dental surgeon, a colonel, worked two hours and, when the job was done, there was the man's chin again, practically as good as new. All that he will have to show for his war scars is a dimple.

USAFPE is broadcasting a news and cheerful propaganda program three times a day, morning and noon and night. The station is in the main tunnel at Corregidor, and it calls itself "The Voice of Freedom".

It makes good listening, and we are heartened to hear that the Asiatic fleet is giving a Japanese fleet hell, in the Macassar Straits. And at last I am hearing the strains of The Star Spangled Banner, that I asked for a while back.

The news broadcast tells of Singapore. Here's hoping she holds out. The announcer keeps telling us that Our Convoy is on the way. We are ready for it, any time.

February 1, 1942:

Only a comparatively small number of casualties are coming in to this station. Whereas the operating pavilion at Limay handled between 125 and 175 on rush days, here at Little Baguio the average per twenty-four hours is about twenty.

Hospital # 2 is getting it mighty rough. Their total of patients right now is over 3000 and still they get 'em.

Corregidor won't take any patients off the peninsula. The tunnel won't hold any more. Above the surface of the ground is too dangerous. A hospital ship is the only solution, and there just isn't any at present.

A Filipino patient who came in yesterday afternoon had an "interesting" experience. He and his "companion" (the invariable name they give to the comrades) were scouting in between the two lines, searching for a sniper.

He knew that a Nip was up a tree somewhere close, but did not know just where.

But the Jap knew where the Filipino was. He, the Nip, saw the Scout squatting on his haunches in the bush.

The Jap Up a Tree drew a bead and pulled the trigger.

The Scout came back to us with a bullet hole through the edge of his helmet, a half inch from the rim, and right little toe hanging by a shred of skin.

A surgeon cut the toe away. Now "Joe" is incapacitated for further fighting and chockful of good stories to tell to his grandchildren. For now he will live to have grandchildren.

Another Filipino came in yesterday who had been wounded in the leg by his own "companion". He was coming back from a sortie to the Jap lines when the companion mistook him for a Nip. The 30-30 went in his shin, shattered the fibula and carried away half of the calf at the back.

'Twas a full moon last night, and the world was bathed in white light. Shadows and ~~all~~, white trunks of trees, sharply etched traceries of leaves and branches, and the temporary quiet, all erroneously spelled peace.

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February 2, 1942

The hottest rumor this morning is that seven Japanese transports ventured a landing on the west side of the peninsula last night, between Kilometer Posts 190 and 200. That would make between ten and twenty kilometers from Mariveles, the other side of the mountain from here. (I guess I will not emulate the bear, crossing to the other side of the mountain, to see what I could see!)

The story is that one of the transports was sunk, and that the other six made a landing, with a full disembarkation of troops and supplies. Almost certainly the story is highly exaggerated.

Twenty or thirty of our tanks did hightail it along here last night, heading south and apparently bent on rounding the point and advancing northward, along the China Sea coast.

Big guns on Corregidor were sounding off last night. One or more Jap planes flew low over his hill top and bombed an objective a short distance to the south.

That rumor of the bombing and the strafing of the old hospital buildings at Limay was another bust. The closest bombing to the compound was just outside the gate.

A Tagalog from the 3rd Battalion of the 45th Infantry, Phil. Scouts, came in with a hand injury yesterday afternoon.

Said he, "We been fighting the Japs steady now for six days and nights at Agloloma bay and along the Agloloma river. I no eat for forty-eight hours. I saw seven Japs. I kill four. The rest got away. There are about two mf platoons of the Japs left."

He went on to say that there were about 300 of the enemy at the landing point, at Kilometer Post 193.

I watched a Lt. Colonel perform a herniectomy yesterday. It was a matter of highly skilled, swift-moving fingers doing an old, familiar job..

His first assistant was a Tagalog registered nurse. She is the equal in efficiency and technique to any nurse, white or brown, on this peninsula.

She stands about four feet ten in her high heeled shoes and might weigh ninety pounds in wringing wet. She has to stand on a packing box placed alongside the operating table, and wrapped up in one of the man-side operating gowns, she looks like baby sister wearing mama's old fashioned long dresses.

But her diminutive size is no handicap, and she is as neat in a number as any bathing beauty when it comes to proportions of this and that. As to her professional ability, she is A-1 on top.

A little task I had this morning was burying an amputated leg.

A man died on the operating table yesterday evening.

February 3, 1942:

That story of the Jap convoy landing has dwindled considerably in the last twenty-four hours, and now it can be told truthfully, maybe.

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